

1249715

Registered provider: Priory Education Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by a large private organisation. It provides care and accommodation for up to seven children and young people aged eight to 17 who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and who are at risk of, or have previously experienced, child sexual exploitation. Education is available on site.

Inspection dates: 12 to 13 October 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 4 July 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- The responsible individual has led and developed the staff team effectively while recruitment to the post of registered manager is under way. Staff are well trained and supported and work well together to provide young people with consistent care.
- Young people have positive relationships with staff. These form a good platform from which young people develop and apply strategies that are helping them to reduce risk-taking behaviour and so feel increasingly safe.
- There is a calm and settled atmosphere in the home. Young people participate in a wide range of activities that reflect their individual interests and talents.

The children's home's areas for development:

- There are shortfalls in the recording of sanctions, complaints and some aspects of risk assessments. Not all records are signed and dated by the author.
- Staff communication with parents is not sufficiently established.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/08/2017	Monitoring visit	No judgement
04/07/2017	Full	Inadequate

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child. (Regulation 12 (2)(a)(i) and (2)(b)) In particular, ensure that the rationale for the frequency of and arrangements for night-time checks is included in the risk assessment.	31/12/2017
The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. (Regulation 39 (3))	31/12/2017
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the name of the child; details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a) (i–vii)) In particular, ensure that all sanctions given by staff are recorded as such.	31/12/2017

Recommendations

- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Where there are safeguarding concerns for a child, their placement plan, agreed between the home and their placing authority, must include details of the steps the home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day to day basis. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5) In particular, ensure that missing person and self-harm protocols provide effective guidance for staff.
- Regulations 35-39 detail the records that must be kept in children's homes. All children's case records (regulation 36) must be kept up to date and stored securely whilst they remain in the home. Case records must be kept up-to-date and signed and dated by the author of each entry. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)
- Registered persons have a key role in seeking to develop the home's effective working relationships with each child's placing authority and with other relevant persons which may include services, individuals (including parents), agencies, organisations and establishments that work with children in the local community, e.g. police, schools, health and youth offending teams (regulation 5 – engaging with the wider system to ensure children's needs are met). These working relationships will also be key to success in delivering the care planning standard (regulation 14). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.3) In particular, ensure that communication arrangements with parents are clarified and known by staff.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people are making progress in the home. They recognise this for themselves, as do those involved with them. The staff team focuses on giving young people highly individualised care that meets their needs. They keep young people in mind, demonstrate this through their actions and young people are responding positively. Young people are making good bonds with staff; interactions are warm, with increasing eye contact, and punctuated with laughter. A professional noted that a young person 'responds to the emotional warmth. X is starting to respect staff and shows this in the responses.'

Young people and their families benefit from staff's flexible approach to supporting contact arrangements. However, one family member, while appreciative of the welcoming attitude of staff, also describes disorganised staff communication and in one instance a perceived lack of sensitivity.

Young people receive good support from staff to meet their physical health needs. Staff implement good medication management procedures. Staff have a sound understanding

of the mental health needs of young people. They are engaging young people in developing strategies that encourage them to use safe methods to express their feelings. This is beginning to make a difference. A parent notes a positive difference and describes a 'calmer person'. This work is supported by good access to, and communication with, professionals both inside and outside the organisation.

Young people are beginning to sustain regular attendance in education programmes tailored to their needs, interests and abilities. They benefit from effective support by care staff in the classroom that promotes their participation.

Young people benefit from and enjoy the active involvement of staff in activities that reflect their interests and talents, such as going to the gym and trips out. Staff are looking to increase opportunities for young people to socialise in the community, where this fits with their care plans. A young person is actively involved in planning a holiday.

Young people's views are actively sought, listened to and acted on by staff as far as possible. They appreciate this and understand when staff explain why they cannot meet specific requests. Records of key-work sessions show a developing and improving relationship that enables young people to open up to staff about things that worry or concern them.

Young people are working on their independent living skills within a clear framework. A young person spoke proudly of her meal planning, budgeting, shopping and cooking.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Staff are knowledgeable about safeguarding procedures through training and refresher discussions in staff meetings. The managers have established links with local authority safeguarding personnel. They are also developing working relationships with local groups providing support for substance misuse and child sexual exploitation.

Since the last inspection, staff have developed an improved understanding and application of risk management. They have used this in practice and as a result young people now feel safe in the home. Staff are keeping better records and documents cross-reference more effectively. Staff implement support plans well and use their growing knowledge, underpinned by recent training, to inform effective new strategies of work with young people. Staff are familiar with the indicators of and risks associated with child sexual exploitation and self-harm. They are also developing an insight into the wider context of these issues for individual young people. Staff know and use effective measures to reduce these risks but the rationale for using some measures is unclear and linked risk assessments are similarly imprecise; for example, the frequency of and arrangements for night-time checks. Some records do not contain enough detail.

The management team has responded thoughtfully to previous episodes of going missing and made environmental changes since the last visit and liaised effectively with local police. Some terms in the missing person protocols are too broad brush and do not provide sufficient guidance for new or agency staff. Young people understand the reason

for any restrictions in their care plans. They are positively engaged in working towards reducing these.

Staff are increasingly consistent in their application of boundaries and targets for the young people. All staff are trained in the behaviour management approach used in the home. They use positive incentives, de-escalation techniques and strategies to good effect. Staff rarely use physical intervention and any such use is in the best interests of the young people. Staff do use relevant sanctions. Not all sanctions imposed by staff have been recorded as such.

Staff may search the room of a young person; however, there is no underpinning policy to clarify the circumstances in which they may do this. Staff recording a room search do not routinely note the reason for the search.

Management application of strong staff recruitment procedures ensures that only those who are considered suitable work in the home.

The home's environment is generally safe and secure. There are sound systems for ensuring that routine servicing and maintenance take place as required.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The post of registered manager is vacant. The organisation has advertised and interviews are under way. In the meantime, the responsible individual is actively involved in the management of the home. She is supporting the home managers effectively in the day-to-day management of the service.

The management team has continued to build on the progress identified in the monitoring visit. Staff benefit from regular supervision, weekly team meetings and training which is tailored to reflect the presenting needs of young people. As a result, staff are working well together and are achieving greater consistency in their working practice. This is helping young people make progress.

The staff welcome the support from the senior managers, which has given them space and opportunities to learn and rebuild since the last full inspection. The management team actively monitors progress against the action plan developed in response to the last inspection. The managers celebrate the home's strengths; areas for further development are known and being worked on. The team is focused on continuing to improve the service and respond positively to input from the independent visitor and in-house quality team. There have been no admissions to the home in this period. The team recognises that new residents will change dynamics in the home and so provides different challenges. Managers are aware that failures in admission planning were a major factor in the poor outcomes for young people noted in the last inspection report. As a result, managers are committed to ensuring that any new referrals will be subject to a comprehensive impact risk assessment to inform their admission decisions. The responsible individual has declined referrals that she considers would not be compatible with young people already living in the home.

The home is working in line with stated aims and objectives as described in the recently updated statement of purpose.

The management team has also been active in rebuilding working relationships with professionals and other stakeholders. This has made a difference and positive relationships are being established. A placing authority visits very regularly to ensure that staff are working in accordance with a young person's care plan. In one instance, there has been some confusion about contact with family members.

The management team's handling of complaints from young people is sound. However, the supporting documentation is weak. Concerns expressed by external sources are addressed but are not recorded as complaints, with no direct feedback to a complainant.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1249715

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Priory Education Services Limited

Registered provider address: 5th Floor, 80 Hammersmith Road, London W14 8UD

Responsible individual: Hannah Cox

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Maire Atherton, social care inspector

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